# VASRD Information Automation
## Briefing for the DEPSECVA

**Joe Paiva**
**Executive Director, VLER**
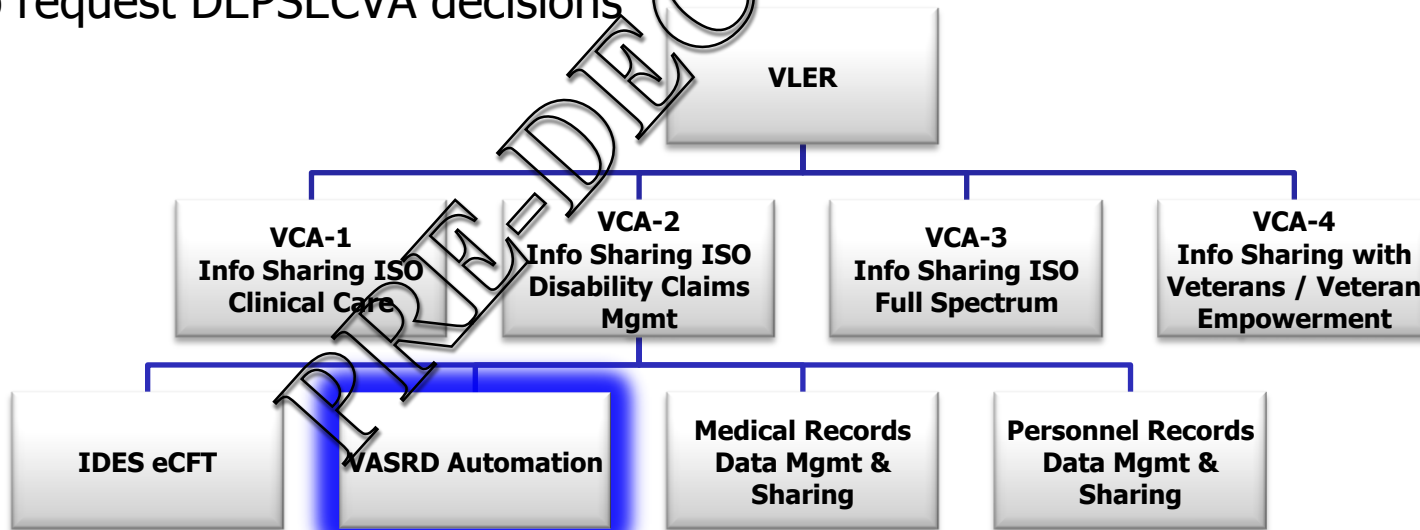**2/26/2013**

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# Agenda

- ❖ **Purpose**
- ❖ **Staffing Page**
- ❖ **Background**
- ❖ **Actions Taken Since Last OMR**
- ❖ **ED VLER Decisions Made**
- ❖ **Demo: Effort #3 (3rd Party Clinician DBQ Web Forms)**
- ❖ **DEPSECVA Decisions Required**
- ❖ **Status and Next Steps**

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# Purpose

❖ To provide an information briefing on VLER Capability Area 2 (VCA-2) VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) Data Automation, to include: description of four distinct efforts, actions taken since the last OMR, decisions made by ED VLER, status of each effort, and next steps

❖ To provide a demonstration of Effort #3 (3rd Party Clinician DBQ Web Forms)

❖ To request DEPSECVA decisions

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# Staffing

This brief was developed in coordination with over 20 representatives from following offices listed:

| Office | Representative |
|--------|----------------|
| VBA-CS | Tom Murphy |
| VHA-DMA | Gerald Cross |
| VA-OGC | Group II, V |
| BVA | Laura Eskenazi |
| OIT-PD | Steve Schliesman |
| VBA-OFO | |
| VBA-VBMS | Alan Bozeman |

Draft - Not Approved

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# Background

- **Automating, to the extent possible, rules-based processing of Veterans' claims for disability benefits is central to the success of VA Transformation**
  - Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) is being developed to provide this automated processing capability
  - For VBMS to work, VA must collect all required elements of a claim file in an electronic format that VBMS can consume and use
- **The VA Rating Schedule (VASRD) is the rating criteria VA uses to evaluate the level of disabilities and assign disability rating**
  - Medical information required to evaluate a disability claim using VASRD is gathered during a Compensation and Pension (C&P) exam
  - DBQ forms are used to collect information (either during a C&P exam, or, from another source) in an OMB-approved format designed to align to VASRD
- **Therefore, collecting DBQ formatted medical information electronically is critical to VBA Transformation**
- **VLER has the mission to automate the collection of medical information required to support disability claim processing (VCA-2)** [5]

# Background
# Four Separate Efforts

1. Enhance CAPRI to better capture VHA C&P exam and other data (~1.2M Exams/Year)
2. Provide "IRS eFile"-like capability for VA contract examiner systems (~250k Exams/Year)
3. Provide DBQ Web Forms for 3rd party clinicians without their own C&P system *(New Potential Channel)*
4. Provide "IRS eFile"-like capability for 3rd party clinicians with their own C&P system *(New Potential Channel)*

**Producers**

| VHA C&P Examiners | Contract C&P Examiners | 3rd Party Clinicians | 3rd Party Clinicians |

① ② ③ ④

CAPRI · Contractor Systems · VA Web DBQ Forms · 3rd Party Systems

**Solution**

Longitudinal Health Record

**VLER DAS**

Data · Data

**Consumers**

| VHA Clinicians | VBA Raters |

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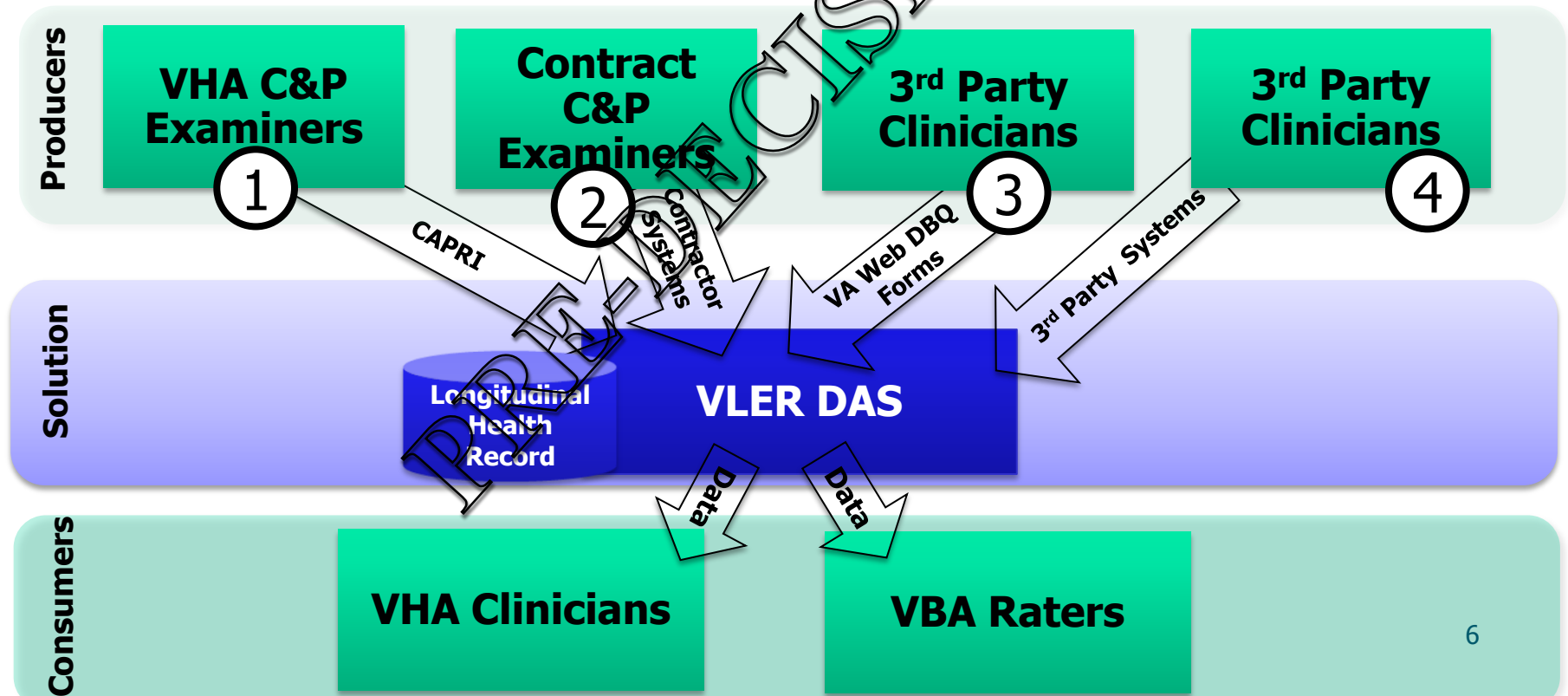
# Actions Taken Since Last OMR

- ❖ VLER and VBMS working together on integration
  - – Target for call and display of computable DBQ data is 30 September
  - – Trying to accelerate by using non-computable data in the short term
- ❖ VLER and VBA met with Contract Examiners to start on-boarding process
  - – Primary goal: capture computable data
  - – If contractors can send non-computable data, there may be a short-term solution that can be accelerated for temporary use
  - – VLER working with VBA and VHA to prioritize contractors for onboarding
- ❖ VBA CS leading re-energized effort to negotiate detailed data field requirements for 3rd party DBQ web forms 12-81
- ❖ VLER working with VHA to develop detailed requirements for additional VA- and DoD-conducted exams

## (Subject to Your Veto)

❖ Prioritized the efforts based on the production volume of C&P exams:
1. VHA C&P Examiners
2. Contract C&P Examiners
3. 3rd Party Clinicians

❖ Directed OIT ITRM/PD to move funds within VLER to support prioritized efforts, including funding of VLER work within CAPRI

❖ Pertaining to Effort #1 (VHA C&P Examiners)
- VHA will provide workflow and end-user requirements for VHA exam system (C&P Plus)
- All information collected by VHA will be stored in the longitudinal health record
  — Information collected in the VHA exam system that is part of the DBQ will be automatically entered into the claims file (VLER/VBS integration and business process TBD)
  — Other information collected in the VHA exam system will be made available to raters via the longitudinal health record (CAPRI)

## (Subject to Your Veto)

- ❖ Pertaining to Effort #2 (Contract C&P Examiners)
  - • Working with VES and QTC first

- ❖ Pertaining to Efforts #3,4 (3rd Party Clinicians)
  - • VBA CS will determine and provide all final DBQ requirements to VLER
  - • VA-provided DBQ web forms will be coded to match the OMB-approved forms, but in interview-style format

- ❖ Pertaining to All Efforts
  - • VLER and VBA CS will continue to collaborate with OGC for legal review of all requirements for all efforts
  - • VBA CS has final decision on what information is collected on the DBQ in a C&P exam
  - • VHA DMA has final decision on what additional information is collected by VHA clinicians and VHA contract clinicians

# Demonstration

# Effort #3
# (3rd Party Clinician DBQ Web Forms)

The DBQ Web Forms Tool is a logic-based, interview-style application that is constrained by OMB-approved forms and provides automated VASRD information for consumption by VBA

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# DEPSECVA Decisions Required

1. Pertaining to Efforts #3,4 (3rd Party Clinicians)
   - The Tool currently has the ability to allow 3rd Party Clinicians to attach additional documents
   - The group recommends limiting 3rd Party DBQ web forms to only what is in the OMB-approved forms and directing users to eBenefits to upload additional information

   Do you concur with the group's recommendation?

2. Does the existing Tool meet expectations for what was promised to external stakeholders as "Turbo Tax"-like DBQ web forms for 3rd Party Clinicians?

# Status and Next Steps

**(R)** **1 -  Enhance CAPRI to Better Capture VHA C&P Exam Data** (IOC TBD)
- Challenge #1: No funding; CR and certification rules
- Challenge #2: Requirements (e.g., policies and processes) not clearly defined (e.g., standards of care vs. OMB forms)
- Challenge #3: Technology platform transition required

**(Y)** **2 -  Provide "IRS eFile" like Capability for VA Contract Examiner Systems** (FOC currently 30 September, attempting to accelerate)
- VLER Data Broker (VLER DAS) tested and operational
- VLER/VBMS integration planned for completion by 30 September
- Exploring options for use of VCIP interface to VBMS as short-term solution
- Working to onboard first contract examiner and prioritize others

**(Y)** **3 -  Provide VA DBQ Web Forms for 3rd Party Clinicians without their own C&P system** (Incremental Deliverables)

**(G)** **4 -  Provide "IRS eFile" like Capability for 3rd Party Clinicians with their own C&P system** (Delivered)
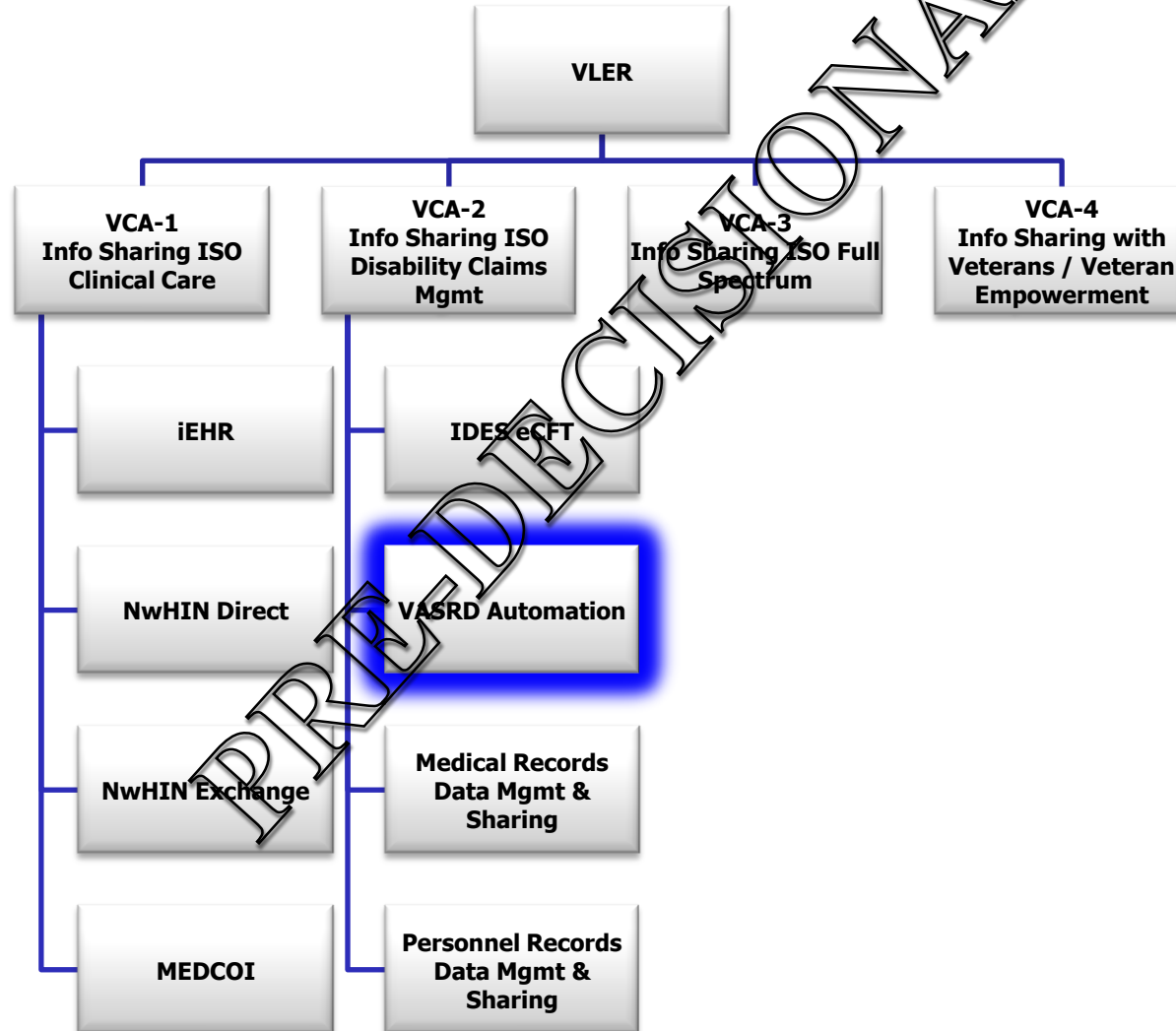- Need to Start Recruiting 3rd party system developers

# Back-up Slides
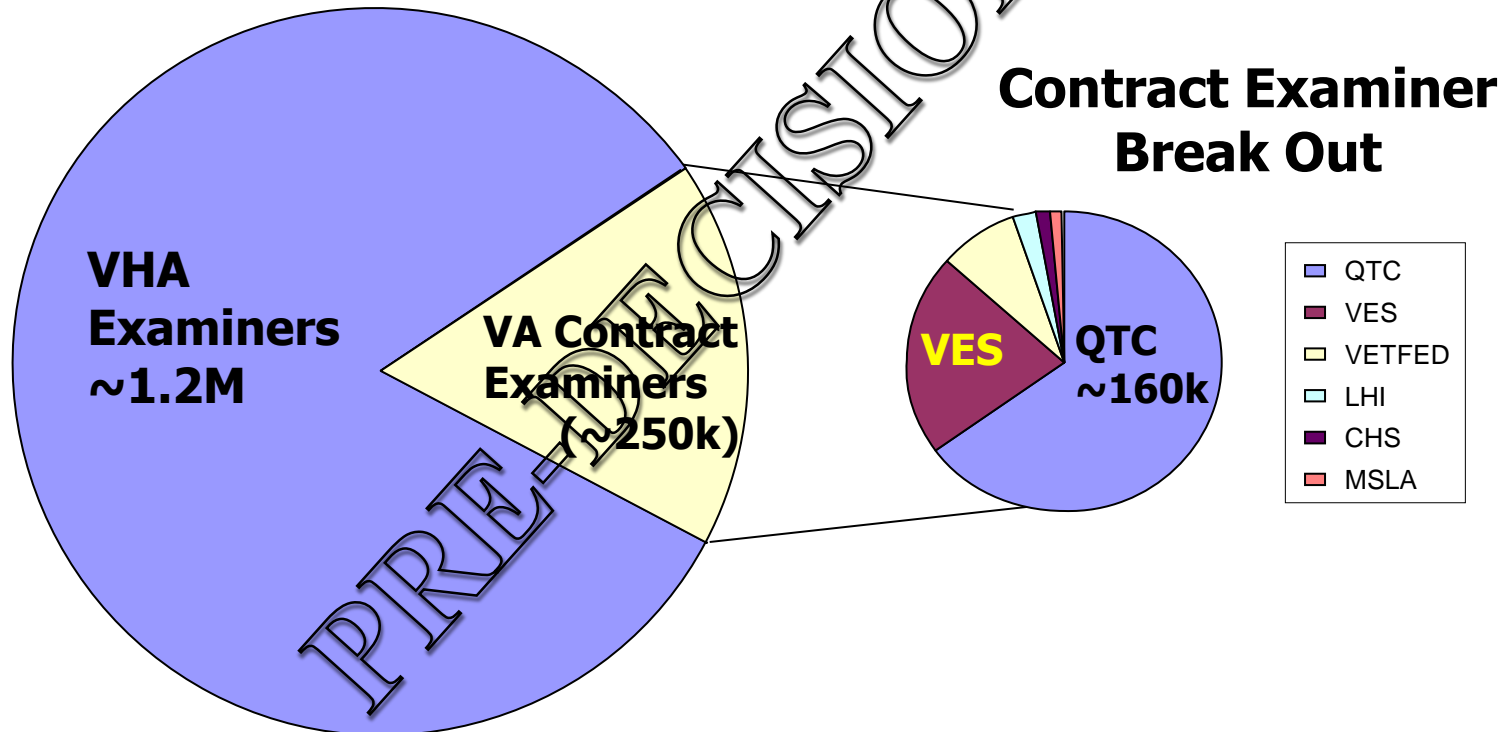
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# VLER Capability Areas

# OPP-Captured Actions

| | Action | Status |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Identify issues involved in transferring VASRD-computable data from VLER into VBMS | **Slide 7,** VLER/VBMS working to identify way forward |
| 2 | Develop and implement ability to feed data from VLER into VBMS | **Slide 7,** VLER/VBMS working to identify way forward |
| 3 | Coordinate with VBA leadership to review prioritization and develop specific proposals, to include tradeoffs, for DEPSECVA to resolve conflicts of priorities | **Slide 7,** VLER/VBMS working to identify way forward |
| 4 | Identify the discrepancy between what the White House is expecting in accordance with the "Turbo-Tax" claims and what VLER is able to provide, and propose courses of action to reconcile the discrepancy | **Slide 11**, Demo |
| 5 | Dr. Cross and Mr. Murphy are to coordinate on the resolution of issues related directly to the format of DBQ schemas and brief DEPSECVA on progress in solving conflicts | **Slide 9,** VBA CS and VHA DMA are working |
| 6 | Develop plan for processing remaining DBQ forms through OMB approval | **Slide 9,** VBA CS and VHA DMA are working |
| 7 | Develop decision briefing for DEPSECVA to identify the requirements owner for DBQ forms to define who has decision authority, how they exercise that authority, and what exactly they have authority over | **Slide 9,** VBA CS and VHA DMA are working |

# Current Environment

**99% of all C&P Exams are currently performed by the VA or VA contracted clinicians who have systems with the potential to output VASRD required medical information in the required format**



VHA Examiners ~1.2M

VA Contract Examiners (~250k)

## Contract Examiner Break Out

VES

QTC ~160k

Legend:
- QTC
- VES
- VETFED
- LHI
- CHS
- MSLA

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## Web Form and XML Schema Development

- Development of XML schemas for DBQ Forms 1-20 completed

- DBQ Forms 1-20 delivered in Nov 2012 with numerous usability issues
  - UAT for first 20 forms identified 216 issues: 71 defects, 78 change requests, 67 others (e.g., Training, Duplicates)

- Retesting second version of DBQ Forms 1-20
  - 56 defects reported by vendor as fixed: 18 repairs confirmed; 38 being tested

- Second version does not address 15 noted defects
  - Working 11 defects with contractor
  - 4 reported defects require business policy decision

- Second round of UAT will be scheduled after VLER IT PMO verifies contractor has fixed defects

- The number of UAT issues are expected to decrease with each incremental release of forms (21-82) as requirements are refined

- All 82 Forms planned for completion by 31 May 2013

| | |
|---|---|
| **Need ability to select ONLY relevant subordinates instead of having to answer "yes/no"**<br><br>**Issue:** If the user answers "yes" to Question 1A. (Does the Veteran now have or has he/she ever been diagnosed with a heart condition?), the user is then required to provide a "yes" or "no" response to each of the subordinate questions in 1B. The user is not allowed to not provide a response to these questions. | **Is a "yes" or "no" response required for all the subordinates?** |
| **Need option to select all that apply**<br><br>**Issue:** If the user answers "yes" to Question 15A. [Does the Veteran use any assistive device(s) as a normal mode of locomotion, although occasional locomotion by other methods may be possible?], the user is then required to provide a "yes" or "no" response to each of the subordinate question in 15A. The user is not allowed to not provide a response to these questions. | **Is a "yes" or "no" response required for all the subordinates?** |
| **The use of Yes/No versus checkboxes**<br><br>**Issue**: If the user answers "yes" to Question 3 (Does the Veteran have any of the following signs or symptoms due to any esophageal conditions?), the user is then required to provide answers to a series of questions about related conditions. The user must answer these questions by checking boxes related to the existence of a condition, its frequency, and its duration. The user is not allowed to not provide responses to these questions. | **Is a response required for all the subordinates?** |
| **The system makes ALL subordinate values required instead of "at least one"**<br><br>**Issue:** Question 4D asks whether testing was conducted on an extremity. By not checking the "Not Tested" box, the user indicates that the testing was conducted. As a result, an answer is required for the four extremities listed. The requirement indicates that at least one answer is required if the user does not indicate that 4d was not tested then the user must answer all subordinate questions related to 4d. | **Is a response required for all the subordinates?** |

**Form Changes**

- What is the governance process for making changes to the Web forms?
  - Layout of OMB PDF form does not align with web form field length requirement.
  - Additional fields in the web form to enhance ID management that are not on OMB form  (e.g., DOB and gender)
- Which office is responsible for changes and has final approval of the paper DBQ forms?
- Which office is responsible for changes and has final approval of the Web forms?
- Which office is responsible for  and has final approval of authorized Super Users of the Forms Editing Tool?
- Which office is responsible for providing Super Users of the Forms Editing Tool?

**Help Desk and Training**

- Which office is responsible for Help Desk support?
- Which office is responsible for providing Training?
  - Who will attend the training?
  - When will the training occur?
  - Where will training be held?
  - What type of training should we plan to conduct, e.g. face-to-face, virtual, both?

**User Authorization and Access**

- Which office is responsible for determining whether users are authorized to use the DBQ web forms?
- What is the business process for authorizing users of the DBQ web forms?
- Which office is responsible for authorizing users of the system?
- Which office is responsible for maintaining a list of unauthorized uses of the system?

# Deep Dive: DBQ Web Forms for 3rd Party Clinicians (4 of 4)

## Communications with Stakeholders

- VLER now submitting detailed weekly report to VBA for major VBA related VLER projects including DBQ web forms

- Weekly VLER report now includes detailed status of issue resolution and defect repairs for DBQ web forms

- VBA assigned a single person to coordinate among numerous VBA organizations that work with VLER

- VLER now providing daily report to VBA when needed to identify critical issues as they arise

- Adding VHA to these reports starting this week

# 90 Day Look Ahead for Automation of Computable VASRD Information Intake

| Planned Key Accomplishments Within Next 180 Days |
|---|
| **VLER Disability Benefits Questionnaire  (DBQ):**<br>**XML Data Standards:**<br>    Release 3 (DBQ Forms 41-60)  19 March 2013<br>    Release 4 (DBQ Forms 61-82)  10 May 2013<br>**Web Forms:**<br>    Release 3 (DBQ Forms 41-60)  19 March 2013<br>    Release 4 (DBQ Forms 61-82)  10 May 2013 |
| **Data Access Services (DAS):**<br>**DAS v4.0:**    Released to Production January 2013<br>**DAS v4.1.0:** Release to Production targeted for February 2013<br>**DAS v4.1.1:** Release to Production targeted for March 2013<br>**DAS v4.2.0:** Release to Production targeted for April 2013<br>**DAS v4.2.1:** Release to Production targeted for April 2013<br>**DAS v4.2.2:** Release to Production targeted for April 2013<br>**DAS v4.3:**    Release to Production targeted for May 2013 |

# C&P Exam Sources

99% of all C&P Exams are currently performed by the VA or VA contracted clinicians who have systems with the potential to output VASRD required medical information in the required format

| Source | FY 12 Exams | System |
|---|---|---|
| **VHA clinicians** | **1.2M** | **CAPRI/CPRS** |
| QTC (VBA/VHA) | 156,238/7,183 | Proprietary* |
| VETFED (VBA) | 21,474 | Proprietary* |
| VES (VBA/VHA) | 15,122/39,502 | Proprietary* |
| LHI (VHA) | 5,905 | Proprietary |
| CHS (VHA) | 3,438 | Proprietary |
| MSLA (VHA) | 3,166 | Proprietary |
| Private Physicians | 0** | N/A |

\* PDF files for VBA requested exams are uploaded to Virtual VA as non-computable data (pdf files)
\*\* Private physicians do not currently provide C&P exams; they provide other evidence

# VLER Value Equation
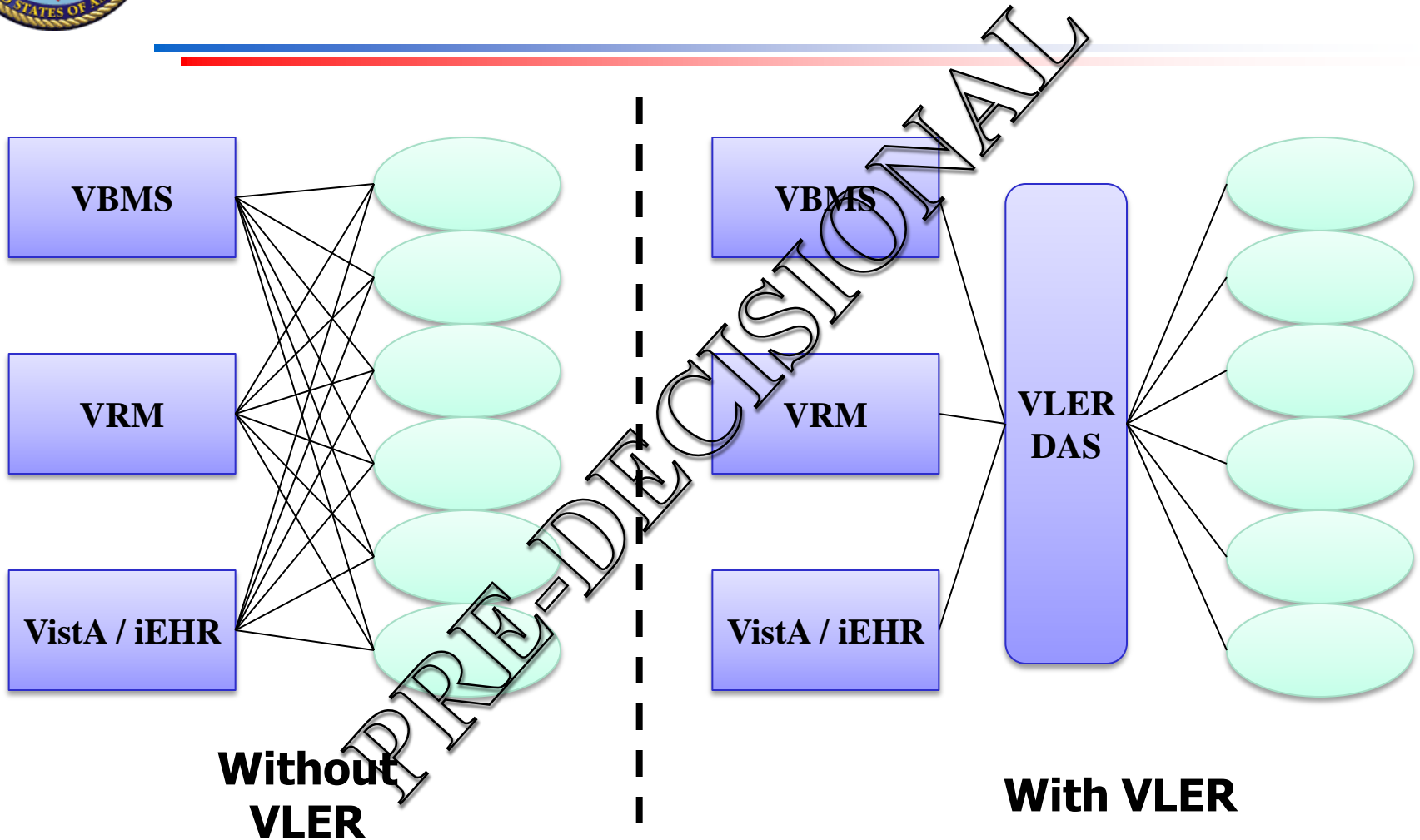
# Technical Details

## Common Standards: XML Schemas
- Lets VA collect fully electronic C&P Exam Data from any producer
- Gives VBMS data in VASRD construct
- Can be modified in response to future policy and paper form changes

## Common Service: VLER DAS
- VLER DAS allows VA to:
  - Ingest C&P Exam Data from these producers,
  - Store the data in a common repository (HDR), and
  - Make the data available to VBMS (and others)



Private Clinician

Contractor C&P Systems

EXTERNAL

VA

VA C&P System

DAS

HDR

VBMS Rules Engine

VBMS PDF Viewer

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